



North East Expressway Transformation (NExT)

Project Description:

Beginning in May 2004, the Ohio Department of Transportation will rebuild the interchanges at I-270/SR 161 and Sunbury Road. This includes rebuilding 17 bridges, 18 Ramps and 5 miles of highway (43 lane miles). The project will take 3.5 years to complete and will cost about \$126 million.

Benefits:

Reduce congestion and accidents by building wider, safer interchanges that can handle more traffic.

Background:

This is the last of a series of projects that began in 1993 to accommodate traffic growth and development on the northeast side. These two projects were originally scheduled to begin in 2005, but were moved to 2004 to complete work sooner.



Need:

The I-270/SR 161/Sunbury Road interchanges are some of the most congested in Columbus. The interchanges were built in the late 1960s and serve far more traffic than they were designed to handle.

- The I-270/SR 161 interchange was designed to handle about 58,000 vehicles per day. It currently handles about 135,000 vehicles. That number is expected to rise to 193,000 by 2020.
- The Sunbury Road/SR 161 interchange was designed to handle about 21,000 vehicles per day. It currently handles about 90,000 vehicles per day, and will rise to about 188,000 by 2025.

Project Details:

- The new interchanges at I-270 and SR 161 will eliminate weaving, merging and pinch points by replacing old “cloverleaf” ramps with new “fly-over” ramps. The new ramps allow motorists to connect directly with the freeway rather than sharing a lane with those entering or exiting.
- The project will add one to two lanes on I-270 from just north of SR 161 to about Sunbury Road, and on SR 161 from I-270 to Little Turtle Way.
- A SPUI (Single Point Urban Interchange) will replace the old interchange at Sunbury Road and SR 161. A SPUI can pump more traffic through the intersection while taking the least amount of right of way.

Construction Schedule:

We will maintain as many lanes as possible. With the exception of off-peak, night and weekend hours, we will maintain:

- Three lanes in each direction on I-270
- Two lanes in each direction on SR 161
- One lane in each direction plus a turn lane on Sunbury Road

Off-peak: Weekdays 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Weeknights 8 p.m. to 5:30 a.m. Weekends 10 p.m. to 8 or 10 a.m.

Road Closures: The Dempsey Road Bridge will close for 160 days during the first year for lengthening.

Ramp Closures: Every ramp at the I-270/SR 161/Sunbury Road interchanges will close at some point during construction for reconfiguration or rebuilding. Time frames range from multiple short-term closures (nightly or over a weekend) to longer closures ranging from 15 to 180 days. Detour routes will be provided for all ramps. There are incentives and disincentives for completing several key ramps.

Easing the Burden:

ODOT is taking pro-active steps and spending extra money to keep the inconvenience of construction to a minimum.

To keep the project on schedule and complete it as quickly as possible:

- Interchange reconstruction at I-270 and Sunbury Road will be done concurrently to reduce the construction schedule from 7 to 3.5 years.
- Contractors will work 24 hours a day.
- ODOT will assess incentives up to \$500,000 and unlimited disincentives to ensure timely completion of work in critical areas.

Why will it take so long?

Rebuilding 17 bridges, 18 ramps and 5 miles (43 lane miles) of pavement will take an immense amount of work - twice the work that went into rebuilding I-670.

In addition, maintaining traffic cuts down on the space in which a contractor can work, making work slower and more difficult.

Staying Informed:

Motorists can avoid surprises by staying informed. A web site for the project will be up and running by February. Also, for information on this or any other road construction project in central Ohio, visit www.buckeyetraffic.org

ODOT will provide e-mail updates for traffic and project-related information, call Lindsay Mendicino at 614-644-6584 or Michelle May at 614-644-8309.

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